[Mr. R. Krishna Pillai.]

The Council resumed the consideration of the budget for 1098.

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS.—(*Contd.*)

Demand XIX.—Stationery and Printing.—(*Contd.*)

***Motion* 150.**

MR. A. GOVINDA MENON: Sir, the motion tabled against my name and the succeeding motion which stands in Mr. G. Paramesvaran Pillai's name are identical. So, he may move it.

PRESIDENT: Mr. Govinda Menon says that motions 150 and 151 are identical. Does Mr. Paramesvaran Pillai make the motion?

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: Yes, Sir, I shall move it.

The following motion was not therefore made:

Mr. A. GOVINDA MENON:

150. To omit the allotment of Rs. 20,000 for purchase of plant (including type).

***Motion* 151.**

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: Sir, I beg to make the following motion:

151. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 20,000 for purchase of plant (including type) by Rs. 15,000.

It is not clear why this sum of Rs. 20,000 should be spent during 1098, while during 1097 a much smaller sum has been allotted. I should like to know for what purpose it is intended to be spent, wherefrom the type is to be purchased, and whether there is no likelihood of its being manufactured here.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI: This sum, *i. e.*, Rs. 20,000, is intended for purchasing new type and also for installing a new engine. The present engine was installed ten years ago. At that time, there were only 19 machines. Subsequently, 17 machines were added, so that there are 36 machines now. The present engine which has only 22 Brake H. P. is unable to drive all the 36 machines. Hence, it is uneconomical to keep the present engine. The proposal is to go in for a 40 H. P. engine and use it for running all the machines. The existing engine may be utilised either in the Public Works Department or in the Central Prison.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI: What will be the cost of installation?

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI: It will be about Rs. 11,000 roughly.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI: May I know whether there is not a linotype machine in the Press and whether it is being used?

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI: There is a linotype machine, and it is being used. As I have already stated, a sum of Rs. 11,000 is intended for installing a new engine and the remaining Rs. 9,000 for

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purchasing new type. Type get worn out and a certain quantity has to be renewed every year.

PRESIDENT: Mr. G. Paramesvaran Pillai wants to know whether types cannot be manufactured here. He thinks that to a large extent they could be manufactured here.

MR. R KRISHNA PILLAI: Some type are manufactured here. Others are purchased. Even for casting type here, we want the necessary materials and labour. It is to cover all these items that a sum of Rs. 9,000 is provided in the budget.

MR. A. GOVINDA MENON: May I know if this sum is simply for purchasing material or for purchasing type and for manufacturing type?

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI: For both. We also require additional Tamil type for want of which we are unable to publish Tamil translations.

MR. A. GOVINDA MENON: I understand that there is a good foundry in which most of the type can be manufactured. Of course, some type may have to be purchased from other places.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI: Whatever can be manufactured is manufactured here.

MR. A. GOVINDA MENON: In view of the fact that Rs. 39,000 was budgeted for last year and nearly Rs. 19,000 was spent in 1096 on the same thing, could we not have some saving out of Rs. 20,000? Is it absolutely necessary to spend the whole of this sum? Of course, Rs. 11,000 is wanted for the engine. That may be spent. Can we not omit Rs. 9,000 from the budget?

PRESIDENT: Mr. Krishna Pillai will answer that point in his reply.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI: Sir, in the light of the explanation given by the Chief Secretary, I am inclined to think that a cut of Rs. 8,000 from the allotment will be quite necessary and economical. I understand that there are about half a dozen type-casting machines in the Government Press, and that all the necessary copper matrices are also available there; for, during the past year, Government had been purchasing on an average five thousand or six thousand pounds of type-metal through the Stationery Department and this accumulated stock must be found in the Government Press. Making some allowance for depreciation and depletion, there must be, I submit, a large stock in the Government Press itself. From the budget, we find that a sum of Rs. 1,330 is allotted for the foundry department, being the pay of the foreman, assistant foreman, etc., and also another sum of Rs. 3,800 for the machine department. In the light of the fact that over Rs. 5,000 has already been allotted for the foundry and machine departments, and in the light of the fact that there seems to be a good stock of lead metal available in the Press, I fail to see why a provision for new type to the extent of Rs. 8,000 should be made. We have also to remember that, in the year 1096, the Government Press has been able to turn out only 31,537 folio pages at a cost of Rs. 1,07,640, which, in the ordinary

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[Mr. M. Raja Raja Varma.]

market, ought not to cost more than Rs. 31,000, besides the price of stationery. Of course, Law Reports, etc., are printed in private presses. The report does not enable us to know whether all the machines in the Press are made use of. The Chief Secretary has told us that there are 36 machines. But there is nothing to enlighten us as to whether all these machines are being made use of in the Press. The Government review on the report simply mentions that 31,000 folios are printed in the Press. But it is not possible to say anything about the impressions taken from each machine. I think that that is a very important piece of information that ought to find a place in the report. In these circumstances, I beg to move, with the permission of the President, an amendment to the effect that Rs. 8,000 be deducted from the allotment of Rs. 20,000.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR: Sir, I support Mr. Raman Pillai's amendment. I think that Rs. 9,000 need not be spent for casting type and that no new type need be bought. If there are matrices in the Press, new type can be cast in the machine. With regard to the presses in the Press, I do not think that all of them are worked. If they are worked, Government will not be forced to spend money for printing electoral rolls and some other things in private presses. So, the allotment, I think, is not quite necessary for the working of the machinery in the Government Press.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI: One thing seems to be more or less clear, and, that is, that all the machinery at the disposal of the authorities in the Government Press are not being used for the purpose of printing. With respect to the linotype machine, I think that it was purchased by Government, if I mistake not, at a cost of Rs. 14,000. The information that I was able to get with respect to that machine is that it has not been properly used. First of all, for using that machine a dynamo and machinery from which considerable horse-power will have to be produced are required. Though the Chief Secretary said that that machine would also be used, to what extent it is used for the purpose of printing, for printing what particular matter, *e. g.*, the Law Reports, the Gazette, etc., it is used, and whether it is sufficiently used, we are not in a position to understand. So, when such a costly machine is placed at the disposal of the authorities of the Government Press, it is extremely questionable to go on adding expenditure on that side without calling upon the authorities to utilise the material already at their disposal. So, though not for the identical reasons put forward by the previous speakers, I would propose that the matter be considered; and, in a general way, I support the amendment that has been brought forward.

MR. M. RAJA RAJA VARMA: Sir, in regard to the linotype machine, I have had occasion to personally see its working and ascertain its uses. I found that it is being used pretty extensively in connection

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with the printing of question papers for examinations in schools and colleges. Where a large number of copies have to be struck off, and that quickly and confidentially, this machine has been found to be particularly useful. The Superintendent, Government Press, told me that the machine was being freely used for that purpose. The Council is, no doubt, aware that, besides the Education Department, there are a number of other departments which are conducting examinations, and that question papers are almost invariably printed. The printing of question papers is being mostly done on the linotype machine. I do not think that there is any day on which the linotype machine is not used. As regards type-casting, I have had occasion to see the type-stores in the Government Press as well as in the Central Prison Press. The supply is certainly inadequate and the stock of type for ornamental and display work is poor. Although type-casting is going on daily and the worn-out type are being systematically renewed, yet want of type is often felt chiefly when big jobs are on hand. As regards matrices, we have not got a sufficient number of them in the Press and they have also to be purchased. I may say that a generous outlay on the purchase of matrices would reduce the bill for type in future years.

PRESIDENT: Is there much standing matter? Have you got standing type?

MR. M. RAJA RAJA VARMA: Yes, Sir.

PRESIDENT: Then, you must explain it and say whether there is more matter than the Press could undertake.

MR. M. RAJA RAJA VARMA: Of course, there is much standing matter. Further, jobs are in different stages of progress. Some are kept on at the instance of the departments to which they relate. Some are kept on permanently to save the cost of fresh composing. The type in those cases are as good as locked up and rendered practically useless for other purposes until they are distributed. I think that, in regard to machinery also, some addition is very necessary as explained by the Chief Secretary. There are some machines which could not be worked, because the power that is supplied by the present engine is insufficient to take the full load.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI: May I know how many impressions of the linotype were taken in 1096 and 1097?

MR. M. RAJA RAJA VARMA: I have no record so far as that is concerned. I have not enquired about the number of copies taken.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI: Sir, Mr. K. P. Raman Pillai has, in his characteristic manner, placed certain facts before the Council—facts which he obtained by a process of cold analysis. On the other hand, there is Mr. Raja Raja Varma basing his opinion on the facts furnished to him when he went to the Press as Efficiency Audit Officer. Mr. Raja Raja Varma's opinion is certainly coloured by the opinion of the

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[Mr. R. Krishna Pillai.]

Superintendent of the Government Press. There is the obvious fact that the Government Press is not able to do all the work required for the Government; and, as Mr. Raman Pillai puts it, Government indent upon the services of private firms to publish Law Reports, industrial and other magazines, voters' lists and such-like things. The plant in the Government Press is certainly of a superior type; and it is a fundamental principle that, if there is a costly machine, you should get the maximum work out of it. To allow a costly plant to lie idle for ever so short a time is certainly inadvisable. The Superintendent, Government Press, is a full-time officer, and he is a man of ripe experience. I daresay that, if Government insist on the Press turning out the whole quantity of work that Government require, the Superintendent will be able to do that. If funds are absolutely necessary, they may also have to be provided. I have been enquiring into this question, and I have been able to find out that the money now given is more than adequate for the purpose. In this connection, I wish to point out that the Superintendent, Government Press, should not be saddled with any other work. I refer to a proposal, which is in the air at any rate, that the stamp manufactory is also to be placed under the control of the Superintendent of the Government Press. If it is so, it will be a very bad system, a very bad coalition of labour, and, I would add, a very bad principle.

PRESIDENT: There is no such proposal now.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI: Then I need not say anything more about it. I think that the expenditure on the Government Press calls for retrenchment, and I very heartily support Mr. K. P. Raman Pillai's proposition.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI: Sir, the expenditure on the new oil-engine proposed to be purchased will not be a recurring one. As regards type, as has been pointed out by my friend, Mr. Raja Raja Varma, a great deal of standing matter is locked up. For example, the Almanacs, the Civil List, and various other formes have to be kept on as standing matter and the type used for them are not available for other work. In this connection, I may bring to notice another circumstance. The total value of the plant in the Press, as it stood on the last day of 1096, was Rs. 1,94,000. The depreciation on this value at 10 per cent. would come to Rs. 19,400 or Rs. 20,000 in round numbers. We shall, therefore, be justified in providing this amount to cover the depreciation.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI: I wish to know whether the depreciation is calculated on the age of the machine, or, on the impression which is the standard adopted in every country.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI: The depreciation is based on both. It is true that the Government Press is not able to turn out as much work as it should. That is because the present engine is not powerful enough. If the amount budgeted for is not allowed, it would seriously affect the work of the Press.

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MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI: I wish to know whether any comparisons have been made between the outlay on the Government Press and the quantity of work turned out there and the amount given to private firms.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI: The work done in the Government Press is cheaper than that done elsewhere. In 1091, the total value of the work turned out in the Government Press was Rs. 94,227 and the receipts from other sources Rs. 16,704. The total receipts amounted to Rs. 1,10,931, while the expenditure was Rs. 71,432.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI: What is the cost of printing a folio page?

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI: I must call for the information from the Superintendent, Government Press, in regard to that question. From the figures furnished by him, I find that, for every rupee spent, we get Re. 1 as. 4 In the year 1091, we got Re. 1 as. 5, and in 1092 Re. 1 as. 4. In 1093, the figure was Re. 1 as. 4.

MR. K. C. MAMMEN MAPPILLAI: I want to know whether, in the above calculation, the interest on the capital is taken into consideration.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI: I am not sure whether the interest on the capital outlay has been taken into account in working out the above figures.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI: Is it possible to know the value of fixed assets, *i. e.*, building, plant and machinery?

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI: It can be ascertained without difficulty. I have not got the figures now.

PRESIDENT: Do you mean to say that no economy is possible?

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI: The amount provided in the budget does not admit of reduction. What is absolutely needed is alone put in.

RAO BAHADUR K. A. KRISHNA AIYANGAR: As a commercial concern, does it pay? The material placed before the Council does not warrant that inference being drawn. Supposing a balance sheet is prepared as in every other business, would the balance sheet show a due return on the investment?

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI: The statement before me shows that it is a paying concern.

RAO BAHADUR K. A. KRISHNA AIYANGAR: Apparently, the material laid before us is intended to show that it is a paying concern; but it is not so in the form in which it is put in.

PRESIDENT: I am afraid that we have not got all the necessary figures.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI: Is there an assurance that an enquiry will be made comparing the rates in the Government Press and those in any private firm?

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[Mr. K. Paramesvaran Pillai.]

PRESIDENT: An enquiry will be made. Of course, it will be part of the general attempt at economising. So many things are on the anvil, and it is difficult to do everything at a time. The enquiry will be made sooner or later. I do not think it will be made in a day or in a month hence. It will be made in the course of a year. I hope that, on that understanding, Mr. Paramesvaran Pillai will withdraw his motion.

MR. J. JOHN NIDIRY: Do the Government also feel the necessity for an enquiry?

PRESIDENT: What is the harm? Let us find out exactly where we are, whether we work at a loss or profit, and whether it is more profitable to close our Press and give the work to a private firm, restricting the operations of the former. Some classes of work will have necessarily to be done by our Press, for example, confidential work. We can limit the work of the Government Press in that way, if it is not a paying concern. Government keep an open mind in this matter.

MR. C. J. CURIEN: There is no doubt that a private press is much cheaper than the Government Press.

PRESIDENT: We shall find it out.

MR. T. LAKSHMANA PILLAI: We shall have to make sure of the quality of the printing also.

PRESIDENT: Yes, quality is also essential. Mr. Paramesvaran Pillai, do you press your motion to a division?

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: No, Sir, I withdraw my motion.

The motion was, by leave, withdrawn.

***Motion* 152.**

MR. K. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: Sir, I beg to make the following motion:

152. To reduce the total allotment of Rs. 3·69 lakhs under Demand XIX by Rs. 75,000.

My object in moving this motion is not merely to draw the attention of the Government to the need for economy in the consumption of stationery, but also, if possible, to make a reduction in the allotment. We are purchasing every year from Rs. 4 lakhs to Rs. 5 lakhs worth of stationery. I believe that, for a small State like Travancore, this is a very large amount to be spent upon stationery. This is clearly proved by the the fact that, by a certain amount of attention and the avoidance of superfineness in the stationery used, Governments have been able to save sufficient stationery from the purchase of last year for the use of three or four months next year.

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I find that, in the State of Mysore, which is much larger than Travancore, the amount spent on stationery is only Rs. 2 lakhs and the establishment charges come only to Rs. 5,000 there. From the Administration Report of the Madras Presidency we find that, till 1920, they were purchasing stationery only to the extent of Rs. 23 lakhs, although, in 1921, they increased it to Rs. 28 lakhs. There are, in the Madras Presidency, 28 Districts. So the average cost per District is only a little more than a lakh of rupees.

RAO BAHADUR K. V. RANGASWAMI AIYANGAR: May I ask the member whether the figure given for Mysore does include the cost of printing paper or not?

MR. K. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: It does not. Even including the cost of printing paper, the average cost of stationery there is only a little over Rs. 4 lakhs. Travancore is only as large as an average District in the Madras Presidency, and, even if we take into consideration the fact that it is a self-sufficient State, I think that our stationery bill ought not to exceed the corresponding cost on an average District in British India by more than 50 per cent. There is no doubt that our bill for stationery is much larger than what may reasonably be allowed. The causes of this are mainly (1) the superfineness of the stationery purchased,—it is admitted by Government that it is so; and we are thankful to the present Government that all care is being taken to avoid superfineness in the quality of stationery and (2) the great leakage—I am sorry to say—that exists in regard to stationery. I do not say that it is confined to the fountain source—the Stationery Department. I believe that it will be admitted by every member on both sides of the House that this is a fact. I think that great pressure must be put upon heads of departments in regard to the consumption of stationery and that greater care should be taken in checking the amount of stationery consumed by each department. I do not know whether any checking is made of the stationery supplied to each department with reference to actual consumption. With some difficulty, I think that it will be possible to know the actual amount required in each department in keeping books and forms, and to compare it with the amount of stationery supplied or consumed. If that is done, a great deal of leakage might be avoided. If it is not possible to check that leakage, it will be advantageous to the Government to avoid the Travancore water-mark. It appears to me that a great deal more is taken away from the Government departments because of the water-mark. When they require a quarter sheet of paper, they take away a whole sheet in order to tear out a quarter of it without the water-mark. I submit that there is great need for exercising control, not only over the Stationery Department, but also over the several departments which consume stationery, and, if proper check and control exist, a great amount of money that is now spent upon stationery might be usefully saved for other purposes. With these words, I make the motion.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI: Sir, I rise to oppose the motion. I have already explained to the Council that we are indebted to the firm of

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[Mr. A. Hoogewerf.]

Messrs. Dickinson and Co., to an extent of Rs. 3 lakhs and odd on account of liabilities up to the end of 1097. It is absolutely necessary that these liabilities should be cleared next year.

Regarding the figures for the establishment charges in Mysore quoted by Mr. Paramesvaran Pillai, I fear they are wrong. I find that the Superintendent and the Assistant Superintendent alone get a pay of of Rs. 14,000 a year there.

In regard to the need for reducing the expenditure on stationery, I may say that steps have already been taken in that direction. The printed forms required for the several departments have been standardised. We have restricted the supply of table-cloth to gazetted officers.

MR. K. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: I find from the budget estimate of Mysore for 1921-22 that the expenditure on the establishment of the Stationery Department there is Rs. 5,336, travelling allowance Rs. 26, etc.

PRESIDENT: I think that is the non-gazetted establishment. The gazetted establishment is separately shown. I know, as a fact, that the Superintendent of Stationery, Mr. Ramachandra Mudaliar, is paid about Rs. 900 a month and he has an Assistant who is paid Rs. 300, a month while the printing of the gazette costs Rs. 8,000 and the establishment Rs. 45,000. It is not a very important matter and it is not relevant at present.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI: I was mentioning the steps taken for reducing the cost on stationery. Locally made articles are being substituted for foreign articles. Pen-knives, wooden blotters, twine, tape, sealing-wax, rulers, ink-powder, ink-stands, etc., are purchased locally, partly with a view to reduce cost and partly to encourage local industries. A Stationery Manual is under preparation. This will regulate the standard of supply.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF : Sir, I think there is much scope for economy here. Once upon a time I was in charge of the Stationery Department. In those days there was much scope for corruption. One sort of paper was contracted for and another sort supplied ; Rodgers' pen-knives were contracted for and other sorts were supplied. One day I was invited for a little dinner by the gentleman who was supplying stationery. It was very uncomfortable for me. After the dinner, he put a big roll of bank notes into my hands saying that it was a wedding present, which, of course, I declined with thanks. All those things have changed now. I quite agree with Mr. K. Paramesvaran Pillai in thinking that there is tremendous scope for leakage.

As I said yesterday, a full sheet of paper is used for official correspondence. Though there is very little written in the body, it begins with "I have the honour to, etc.", and ends with "I have the honor to be, etc." There seems to be more frill than shirt. I beg to suggest that the docket form might be used in many cases where the official letter form

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is now used. Some space might be left below the sheet of paper or on one side of it for the answer so that everything might be in the same sheet. An abstract might be entered in the office register. In this way a great deal of saving could be effected. In covers also, a lot of brown paper is wasted in some offices for cutting them to the proper shape. These are just one or two suggestions for effecting economy.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI: Sir, I should like to know whether it is possible, with respect to the quantity of stationery that is being distributed among the various officers of the State, to check the actual utilisation of paper and to call upon such officers to account for the utilisation of stationery at the end of each year, or, at least for one year as a tentative measure to check the use of the stationery that is supplied.

PRESIDENT: It is not a proposition that will be fruitful of any result. I can understand your fixing a standard of issue. You can have a sort of contract contigency system. The Chief Secretary has told you that a Stationery Manual has been nearly completed. There, after making certain calculations, the standard of supply is being fixed for various offices. For anybody to go and see that the quantity supplied according to that standard has been fully utilised or not, will not, I fear, be fruitful of results. For, the officers concerned will take care to see that at the end of the year nothing is left. Stationery is a thing in which, even with the utmost care, there will be a certain amount of leakage. The only effective way is to fix a standard of supply. But the fixing of that standard is not an easy matter. The sort and quantity of work done in various offices will have to be compared and then the standard has to be fixed. There will be an appendix to the Manual regarding this and we can limit the issue to such standard; and then I think you might expect some real economy. There is no doubt that there is some waste now. But the Government are trying to economise. It is necessarily a slow process.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI: I wish to know whether the officers concerned could be called upon to account for the stationery they are supplied with or not.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLLI: They are bound to do it. It is only after we receive a statement from heads of departments that the quantity already supplied has been spent that a new supply is made.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI: I think that table-cloths and pen-knives need not be supplied year after year.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI: These are quinquennials. So far as table-cloths are concerned, they are permeanently affixed to tables now.

MR. S. KRISHNA AIYAR: Mr. President, I understand that elsewhere commercial departments are allowed to purchase their own stationery and to do their own printing and that they are allowed to use their own contingencies, because deficits are sometimes found in those departments. For example, in the Post Office Department they refused to purchase their stationery from Government and they have been allowed to purchase their own stationery, thereby effecting a saving.

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[Mr. T. K. Velu Pillai.]

Why should not the Anchal Department be allowed to buy its own stationery and do its own printing in order that the present deficit may not recur?

PRESIDENT: By so much of diversity in the source of supply you will be frustrating your own object.

MR. S. KRISHNA AIYAR: I refer to the commercial departments. The Anchal Department now work under a deficit. The value of the stamps need not be enhanced, if my suggestion is accepted. Why should not such a course be adpoted?

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI: Sir, to my mind, it appears, that both the Stationery and the Printing Departments ought to be under one person. It is highly necessary that the Stationery Superintendent should know something about printing; otherwise, he is likely to place orders with the contractor or buy paper which, when sent to the press, will result in wastage. I listened to the assurance given by the Chief Secretary that all attempts are made to reduce wastage. But, if I draw the attention of the House to a few communications sent by the Secretary to the members of the Council, one might doubt whether the idea has been put into practice. This is the letter in which we are asked to furnish our Trivandrum address:

"Sir, I have the honor to request that you will be so good as to furnish me with your Trivandrum address at an early date."

I have, etc.,
(Sd.) S. PARAMESVARA AIYAR,
Secretary, Legislative Council."

This is all the request that covers one foolscap page. The programme given to us is printed on half of a foolscap page and compared to this it is clearly seen that the other is a wastage. And from several other comunications we can see that there is wastage going on still. On our arrival, the District Superintendent of Police favoured us with a notice regarding the fares to be paid to carriages that could be hired. I find that a full sheet has been utilised for that. I think that the pruning-knife could very well be applied here with greater "relentlessness" and with profit to Government.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI: Sir, we have heard the pruning-knife mentioned very often in the course of the budget discussion. Sometime ago the pruning-knife was requisitioned by the members to cut down the budget. Mr. K. P. Raman Pillai wants it to-day to cut down paper. (*Laughter.*) I am sorry I cannot agree with him. Respectability has to be maintained; decorum has to be maintained. I cannot understand if it would be proper on the part of Government to write letters in quarter-sheets or octavo-sheets. When I was an Excise Inspector, I sent a communication to the Assistant Commissioner, who happened to be a non-graduate. As it was written on a quarter-sheet of paper, he returned it to me with the observation that he expected much better decorum from graduates. I was quite ashamed. I do not want to repeat it. False economy should never have priority over considerations of decorum and dignity. Therefore, I am obliged to oppose Mr. K. P. Raman Pillai's suggestion.

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MR. K. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: We have been assured that every attempt is being made to minimise the cost of stationery, and that the Government are enquiring into the matter and devising every possible means for the purpose of cutting down consumption. This year the amount of Rs. 3 lakhs provided in the budget is not for the purchase of stationery, but only for paying the debt already incurred by Government. With the request that Government, in the budget for stationery next year, would take into consideration the suggestions made by us, I withdraw the motion.

The motion was, by leave, withdrawn.

***Motion* 153**

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI: Sir, I beg to make the following motion:

153. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 3·69 lakhs under Demand XIX by Rs. 50,000.

My object is to draw the attention of the House to the Government review on the administration of the Government Press for 1096.

The review says that the depreciation during the year amounted to Rs. 11,285. What is the rule or rate prescribed for calculating this depreciation? The Chief Secretary tells us that it is 10 per cent. and it is based on the rule of thumb. It should be calculated either on the age of the machine or on the turn-out from each machine; if it is calculated irrespective of the turn-out, I submit that there is a possibility of the machines being kept idle for a number of years and then sold for nothing, as it may be shown that the machine has lost its full value by depreciation. By calculating the depreciation merely on the basis of the age of the machine, the outlay and the cost of production would appear to be less than what they really are.

Then again, some money was spent last year for the purchase of additional machines. There were already 19 machines, as the Chief Secretary told us, and a number of hand-presses besides. There was also the linotype machine costing about Rs. 20,000 and the rubber-stamp machine. There is nothing in the review to enable the public to understand whether full advantage is taken of all these machines or not and how many impressions are taken out of these machines.

The report says that the outturn increased by 24 per cent., while the expenditure rose only by about 9 per cent. I contend that there is absolutely no justification for the increase in expenditure, while the outturn ought to have been much more, if the resources of the Press had been fully availed of.

In the composing department, the number of standard pages—fools-cap folios—set during the year was 31,357. The cost of composing these pages would be only Rs. 16,000, if we calcluate it on the world-wide standard of payment for composing, *viz.*, 2 annas for 1,000 *ens* or 500 *ems*; and the cost of printing the same at 8 annas per 1,000 folio pages would come to another Rs. 16,000. So that the work turned out by the Government Press in 1096 could be got done in the open market at a cost of about Rs. 32,000, besides the cost of stationery. But the Government have spent Rs. 1,09,661 for labour, besides the cost of materials.

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[Mr. R. Krishna Pillai.]

There is another aspect in which the cost of production has to be looked at. The number of compositors required for composing 31,537 pages at 6½ hours a day, as fixed in the Government Press, is only 21,830. Calculating at Re. 1 per day per compositor this ought to cost Government only Rs. 21,830.

The Financial Secretary has very conveniently omitted to give the actuals under the heads of composing, reading, piece-work and temporary piece-work establishments in this budget or in the previous budgets. The budget estimate for 1097 shows that a sum of Rs. 36,000 was allotted for the permanent and temporary piece-work establishments and overtime allowance, besides Rs. 78,849 for the reading and composing establishments and supervision charges. We must also remember that there has been no reduction in the number of hands employed or cost incurred in proportion to the amount invested by Government for the purchase of labour-saving machines such as the linotype machine. This shows that the work in the Government Press is costing Government an amount several times larger than what it would cost if the work is done outside. Therefore, there is no justification for the increase in cost and the outturn is quite inadequate when the outlay and expenditure are taken into consideration. The following observation made by the *Madras Mail* is very suggestive:

"In other countries public bodies find it cheaper and more convenient to let their printing work out on contract to respectable firms, and, if this were done, the printing industry would develop to a much greater extent, to the benefit financially of the Government and of everybody else."

The time has come for a full investigation of the question from this point of view, and, I think, it will receive the earnest consideration of the Travancore Government.

With these words, I withdraw the motion.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI: Sir, I rise to a point of order. Mr. K. P. Raman Pillai has made the motion; but it has not been replied to. I think he could withdraw only after hearing the other side.

MR. V. SUBBA AIYAR: The practice in such cases seems to be that, if a member wants to withdraw, he must stand up and say so without making a speech.

PRESIDENT: The House may allow the member to withdraw his motion.

The motion was, by leave, withdrawn.

PRESIDENT: I now put to the vote of the House Demand XIX —Stationery and Printing—for a grant not exceeding Rs. 3·69 lakhs.

The motion was carried and the grant made.

Demand XX Scientific and Miscellaneous Departments.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI: Sir, I rise to move for a grant not exceeding Rs. ·52 lakh under Demand XX—Scientific and Miscellaneous Departments—(Museum, Observatory, Photograph Department, Establishment under the Steam Boilers and Prime Movers Regulation, Census and the Revenue Test Examination).

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